


English Motoring Club

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"A gentleman does not motor about after dark." -- Joseph Lucas, attrib.



It's a Tops D(r)own Party!

by Terry Trovato

JACKSON, MISS. — EMC's famous "Tops Down Party" is a popular club fixture: it serves as a tribute to the vernal equinox and salute to the spring driving season. On cue, the Social Chairman gives the command, and all tops are lowered simultaneously.

This year's get-together was held April 1st, but the

in place by 1 p.m. included a grand assortment of British iron — with one illegitimate cousin, a 1973 Citroën *Deau Chevaux*, a French two-cylinder sedan that was a recent Valentine gift from EMC member Pat Cashman to his wife, Barbara. It drew a great deal of attention.



Après ça, le déluge: Before the storm, handsome British iron in a picturesque setting.

Photos by Terry

Winner of the longest-distance-driven-to-the-event award was Jim Wilson, who motored 620 miles from Louisville, Ky., in his 1963 E-type roadster. Jim received a case of Castrol 20W-50 for his efforts. Runner-up in this category was Pete Emery, who journeyed from Memphis.

After greetings were exchanged and picnic lunches were consumed, it was time for Keith to give his famous "Tops, down!" command. But before the words could be uttered, the flash of lightning and booming roll of thunder had participants scrambling for their cars. And the rain didn't stop; it got worse as the hour wore on.

Soggily retreating from Rocky Springs, with tops and

officers should have known that placing the event on April Fool's Day would serve as a bad omen. And Keith Anderson, the Club's splendid Social Chairman, made the mistake of penning in the invitation "...the Tops Down Party has never been rained out in the past 14 years!"

Somehow, Mother Nature got wind of Keith's comment, and the result was a Tops "Drown" Party (and final quality control exam for all the Lucas electrics embedded in members' and guests' cars!).

The morning dawned brisk and overcast, with no rain scheduled until the following day. Happily, members and their guests began motoring down the picturesque Natchez Trace Parkway for a picnic rendezvous at Rocky Springs Park. Those assembled and

windows leaking merrily as always, members of the entourage slowly headed to their respective abodes, all wishing they had defrosters that worked and wind-screen wipers which would move quicker than their designed .0001 revolutions per second.

Next year, we suspect Keith will choose his words more carefully.